

Remarks

Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested. Claims 1-9 remain pending.

In the final Office Action, claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bapat et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,236,996; hereinafter, "Bapat") in view of Celik (U.S. Patent No. 6,374,259; hereinafter, "Celik"). Applicants respectfully, but most strenuously, traverse this rejection for the reasons stated below.

Applicant's invention is directed to an automatic update of a user's access right to data that is to be used in common by multiple users, the update occurring concurrently with, and in response to, a transmission of reference information to the user. The reference information refers to the data to be shared and is required by the user to access the data. That is, while reference information to shared data is being transmitted to a user, that user's right to access the shared data is also being granted automatically. These concurrent actions differ from the conventional approach of shared data access control, wherein the grant to a user of an access right to shared data occurs before (i.e., not concurrently with) the transmission of reference information to that data. By performing the update of access rights automatically, concurrently with, and in response to the transmission of the reference information to the user, the present invention avoids the need for an authorized entity to perform this update prior to the transmission.

As one example, applicant claims a computer system for controlling access to data to be used in common by multiple users (e.g., claim 1). The system includes data storage for storing the data in common and an access management table that includes access management data to control an access right to the data in common. The system also includes a control means for automatically updating the access management data in the access management table, concurrent with and in response to transmitting a communication from a first user to a second user. The communication includes reference information to the data to be used in common and the first user is authorized to grant to the second user an access right to the data. The second user is granted the access right to the data pursuant to the automatic updating of the access management data responsive to the transmitting of the communication. Thus, in applicant's claimed invention, the automatic update of the access management data is concurrent with, and responsive to, a transmission of a communication that includes reference information to a user

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whose access right to data to be used in common is granted pursuant to the automatic updating, which is responsive to the transmitting of the communication. This is very different from the teachings of Bapat and Celik, either alone or in combination.

For instance, Bapat fails to describe, teach or suggest the above-described communication that includes reference information transmitted from a first user to a second user, wherein the second user is granted the access right to the data pursuant to the automatic updating responsive to the transmitting of the communication. Instead, Bapat describes a technique for controlling access to data based on access restrictions in a DBMS that are updated in response to the update of access rights in an access control engine (ACE) (col. 18, lines 36-40; see also 280 in FIG. 9). This updating of access rights allows users to use standard DBMS report generators while still providing the same access restrictions as those that apply to normal management information requests (col. 3, lines 8-13). There is no discussion at all in Bapat of a transmission of a communication, in which reference information is included, to a user who is granted an access right to data to be used in common pursuant to an automatic updating of access management data responsive to the transmission. If the access control technique in Bapat were to use such a communication, it would be transmitted prior to a user successfully accessing data via an access request. User access requests are depicted in Bapat in FIGs. 3, 5, 6, 9 & 10; however, none of these figures indicate that the above-described communication occurs at all, let alone prior to the user access request. Thus, for these reasons, applicant respectfully submits that Bapat does not teach or suggest applicant's recited communication characterized as described above.

In the Response to Arguments section of the Office Action, col. 18, lines 36-40 and col. 32, lines 49-54 were cited to support the "concurrent with" and "in response to" aspects, respectively, of applicant's claimed invention. The cited lines in col. 18 describe the automatic update of access restrictions imposed by the DBMS "whenever" access rights to corresponding event notifications are modified in the ACE. Applicant believes that the usage of "whenever" in this section does not impose concurrency on the two updates. However, assuming, *arguendo*, that these updates do occur concurrently, applicant submits that neither of these updates teach or suggest applicant's recited transmission of a communication that includes reference information to a user, wherein the user is granted an access right pursuant to the automatic updating of the access management data responsive to the transmission of the communication. For example,

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neither of the updates is performed by a command transmitted to a user who is granted an access right to data pursuant to the automatic updating of access management data. Instead, the update commands are transmitted to the systems (e.g., the DBMS) that control access rights (see, e.g., col. 18, lines 1-9). These systems, however, are not being granted access rights themselves pursuant to the update. Therefore, as recipients of the update commands, these systems are not teaching or suggesting applicant's recited user who is granted an access right pursuant to the automatic updating.

The cited lines in col. 32 describe a part of Bapat's access control scheme that includes instructions for retrieving management information from managed objects in response to user access requests. Although this section describes one action being done "in response to" another, applicant strenuously traverses any conclusion that the user's access request teaches or suggests applicant's communication that includes reference information, which is transmitted to a user who is granted an access right. The user's access request is transmitted from the user to whom an access right is granted. In contrast, applicant's recited communication that includes reference information is transmitted to a user to whom an access right is granted.

Further, the Office Action points to col. 15, line 67 – col. 16, line 7 to support its rejection. This section of Bapat describes the virtually simultaneous updating of local copies of access control trees in the Management Information Server (MIS) and auxiliary servers (see FIG. 8 thereof). The presence of concurrent actions in Bapat does not describe or suggest the specific concurrent actions recited in the present invention. To perform the update of the local copy of an access control tree, the MIS and auxiliary servers are the recipients of an event notification indicating a change in the access control tree (col. 15, line 67 – col. 16, line 2). These recipient servers provide control of access rights assigned to users, but are not being granted an access right themselves pursuant to the update of the tree. In contrast, as noted above, the recipient of the communication that includes reference information is the user to whom an access right to data is granted pursuant to the automatic updating of the access management data.

Still further, the Office Action cited col. 16, lines 55-61 relative to the above-noted concurrency feature. This section discloses a user communications interface by which insert statements and read requests are submitted and processed by a standard SQL engine. There is no discussion in this section that the insert statement and the read requests are concurrently

processed. Further, the insert statement and the read requests are transmitted to components of the DBMS (see col. 16, lines 58-61 and FIG. 9 thereof), which is different from applicant's recited communication transmitted to a user, wherein the user is granted an access right to data pursuant to an automatic updating of the access management data responsive to the transmission of the communication. Thus, Bapat does not describe or suggest at least this feature of the present invention.

Based on the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that Bapat does not teach, suggest or imply various features of applicant's claimed invention. Celik fails to overcome the deficiencies of Bapat as applied to the present invention.

For example, while the Celik patent describes retrieving business contact information stored in an internet-accessible database, it fails to describe, teach or suggest a communication, in which reference information is included, transmitted to a user who is granted an access right to data pursuant to an automatic updating of an access management data responsive to the transmitting of the communication. The information management technique of Celik includes assigning a first user a unique user identification number, storing information related to the first user in a remote database, and passing the first user's identification number to a second user (e.g., on a business card), thereby enabling the second user to access the remote database over a network to retrieve information relative to the first user by entering the unique user identification number (see Abstract thereof). Prior to assigning the unique user identification number to the first user, the first user's account preferences are set up, which include various grants of access rights to the first user's information (col. 7, lines 21-23; see also col. 6, line 35 col. 7, line 15 and FIGs. 4A, 4B & 5). Since the grant of an access right in Celik occurs before the assignment of a user identification number, the access right grant also occurs prior to the passing of the identification number from the first user to the second user. Thus, the second user is not granted an access right pursuant to an automatic updating of access management data responsive to the communication that includes the reference information, as claimed by the present invention. Instead, the second user in Celik is granted an access right pursuant to a process (see FIG. 5) that occurs prior to (not responsive to) the communication that includes reference information.

The Office Action cites the Abstract, col. 1, lines 50-58, col. 11, lines 51-57 and col. 2, lines 38-46 as teaching the first user authorized to grant an access right and a second user who is

granted the access right. These sections of Celik disclose access rights and an authorized first user and a second user who is granted the access right. As noted, the timing of the grant of the access right and the passing of reference information (the unique identification number) precludes a teaching or suggestion of applicant's recited communication to a second user, wherein the user is granted an access right to data pursuant to the automatic updating of access management data responsive to the transmission of the communication.


For the reasons stated above, applicants respectfully submit that Celik, like Bapat, fails to teach, suggest or imply at least the above-described functionality, wherein the second user is granted the access right to the data pursuant to an automatic updating of the access management data responsive to the transmitting of the communication.

For all the above reasons, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of independent claims 1 & 8. The dependent claims are believed patentable for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they directly or ultimately depend, as well as for their own additional characterizations.

All the claims are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss this case with applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact his representative at the below-listed number.

Respectfully submitted,


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